

## As COVID cases fall, Halloween brings more fun and less fear

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST  
and TERRY TANG

**PHOENIX (AP)** — Witches and warlocks, ghosts and ghouls can breathe a little easier this year: Coronavirus cases in the U.S. are generally on the decline, and trick-or-treaters can feel safer collecting candy. And while a new poll indicates Halloween participation is rebounding but still short of pre-pandemic levels, an industry trade group says people who are celebrating are driving record-level spooky spending this year.

Sales of candy, costumes and décor are up at least 25% over last year and are predicted to set a new high, between \$10 to \$11 billion, said Aneisha McMillan, spokeswoman for the trade group Halloween

and Costume Association. "People are really getting the Halloween spirit," she said.

Though the pandemic is still a worry, outdoor activities like trick-or-treating have gotten the thumbs up from Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious diseases expert, and Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Experts advise people to keep sanitizer and masks handy and continue to steer clear of crowded, poorly ventilated spaces, however.

Angela Montierth of Sandy, Utah, said watching her 4-year-old daughter, Justina, celebrate Halloween this year has been "magical."

Continued on next page



Grayson Martin, 3, poses in his costume as his parents Rachelle and Patrick Martin, look on, during a visit to Discovery Gateway Children's Museum on Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021, in Salt Lake City. Associated Press

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**Continued from Front**

The family didn't do much for the holiday in 2020 besides putting out candy for trick-or-treaters, so this fall they've been trying to make up for it.

"We did a pumpkin patch and we had a little Halloween get-together at our house with other little kids," Montierth said at a trick-or-treat event at Discovery Gateway Children's Museum in nearby Salt Lake City. "At this age they need to be playing with other kids, and they need the socialization aspect."

A new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that 35% of Americans plan to hand out candy this Halloween, down from 42% in pre-pandemic 2019 — but still higher than the 25% mark seen in a separate NORC survey in 2020. Meanwhile 16% said they intend to take their kids trick-or-treating, compared with 25% in 2019 and 12% last year.

Among those skipping the door-knocking again this year is Rolando Cadillo of Phoenix, whose family includes a 15-year-old daughter and 4-year-old son. Last year they opt-



**Colette Thompson, 4, laughs at a performer during a Halloween celebration at Denver's Union Station on Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021.**

Associated Press

ed for a pandemic-safe Halloween at home and skipped giving out candy. This year they are stocking the sweet stuff but keeping the face masks on.

Cadillo's son will dress up as Spider-Man but won't be trick-or-treating, and he's

on the fence about whether to let his daughter go with her friends.

"We plan to stay home, but we're going to give candies to the kids that knock on the door," Cadillo said as the family left a Halloween Spirit costume store. "I think it's better than last year. More people got vaccinated."

Nearly 191 million people in the United States are fully inoculated against COVID-19, about 58% of the population. The country is on the verge of expanding its vaccination effort to children aged 5 to 11, but that won't come until after Halloween pending final approval from the CDC.

Last year Halloween arrived as cases rose to about 81,000 a day around the country in the start of what ended up being a deadly winter surge. Many parades, parties and haunted houses were canceled due to bans on large gatherings and concerns that celebrations would spread the coronavirus. Others went ahead but with pandemic wrinkles and, at times, a nod to the nation's penchant for turning to fear as entertainment in times of turmoil.

Today infections are on a downward swing in the U.S.,

currently averaging about 73,000 new cases per day compared with 173,000 in mid-September.

Concerns still remain, especially where rural hospitals remain strained. Also in the Phoenix area, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community has banned Halloween activities after a 140% jump in cases.

But in many places, people are ready for a holiday weekend full of festivities. In Denver, families visited Union Station for a trick-or-treat parade, a face-painting station, a DJ playing Halloween tunes and a children's train ride. A dad dressed as a chef carrying a tiny baby dressed as an ice cream sundae led his cupcake children through the halls, collecting candy as "Monster Mash" played in the background.

Sara Castiglione and her 5-year-old daughter, Emma, were back in the swing of Halloween this year. After hitting the parade on Thursday, Castiglione said their weekend plans include a pumpkin patch and more trick-or-treating.

Last year Emma "was very disappointed and sad that she wasn't able to do anything because of coronavirus," Castiglione said.

"She even said today, 'I'm so glad we can go outside and I don't have to wear a mask and we get to do something. I don't even care (about) dressing up, I just wanna do something!'"

Among the costume set, classics remain hot-sellers this year with Google search trends indicating witches, rabbits and dinosaurs are in the top spots. More contemporary get-ups inspired by the likes of the South Korean Netflix smash "Squid Game" and "WandaVision," the hit Marvel series, are also popular, McMillan said. There are even a few topical offerings, like a couples costume of a vaccine and syringe, she said.

But the surge of enthusiasm means there have also been some costume shortages attributed to retailers' uncertainty in placing orders combined with the supply-chain issues bedeviling many parts of the economy.

"A lot of people are getting really creative because they can't find the singular costumes they wanted. They're doing group costumes, or couples costumes, so they can kind of mix and match and pull things together," McMillan said. Some trends have shifted since last year, with fewer people choosing first-responder and superhero costumes and more leaning toward pop culture and nostalgia.

"This is the millennials' absolute favorite holiday, and they are notoriously nostalgic," McMillan said. "We've all been cooped up for so long. ... I think it's gonna be the biggest celebration ever." □

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# White House renews bid to end 'Remain in Mexico' policy

**SAN DIEGO (AP)** — The Biden administration on Friday launched a second bid to end a Trump-era policy to make asylum-seekers wait in Mexico for hearings in U.S. immigration court, while also reaffirming a commitment to reinstate it under court order.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the "Remain in Mexico" policy likely contributed to a drop in illegal border crossings in 2019 but with "substantial and unjustifiable human costs" to asylum-seekers who were exposed to violence while waiting in Mexico.

The announcement came more than two months after a federal judge ordered that the policy be reinstated "in good faith," while leaving an opening for the administration to try again to justify ending it.

The administration said earlier this month that it expected to reinstate the policy, known officially as "Migrant Protection Protocols," around mid-November, subject to Mexican government approval. Mexico wants cases to generally



A woman seeking asylum in the United States waits with others for news of policy changes, Friday, Feb. 19, 2021, in Tijuana, Mexico.

Associated Press

conclude within six months, timely and accurate access to case information and better access to legal counsel for asylum-seekers. Some of the administration's most prominent pro-immigration allies say Friday's opinion was overdue and that Mayorkas lacked a sense of urgency. U.S. officials deny slow-walking

and point to the research that went into producing the 39-page memo.

Many U.S.-based legal aid groups who have represented asylum-seekers waiting in Mexico say they will no longer take such cases, raising questions about how the U.S. can satisfy Mexico's insistence on better access to coun-

sel. Administration officials say they believe there are enough other lawyers who will represent asylum-seekers sent back to Mexico.

About 70,000 asylum-seekers have subject to the policy, which President Donald Trump introduced in January 2019 and his successor, Joe Biden, suspended on his first day in office. May-

orkas ended the policy in June after an internal review, saying it achieved "mixed effectiveness."

Illegal border crossings fell sharply after Mexico, facing Trump's threat of higher tariffs, acquiesced in 2019 to the policy's rapid expansion. Asylum-seekers were victims of major violence while waiting in Mexico and faced a slew of legal obstacles, such as access to attorneys and case information.

Mayorkas said Friday that his second review assumed the policy caused a significant drop in border crossings, calling it the strongest argument to keep it. Still, he said benefits do not outweigh costs in terms of relations with Mexico, resources and risks associated with exposure to violence while waiting in Mexican border cities.

"(There) are inherent problems with the program that no amount of resources can sufficiently fix," he wrote. "Others cannot be addressed without detracting from key Administration priorities and more enduring solutions." □

# U.S. hits Iran with sanctions ahead of key nuke talks meeting

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The United States on Friday hit Iran with a fresh set of sanctions as President Joe Biden prepares for a key weekend meeting with European leaders to discuss the possible resumption of nuclear talks with the Islamic Republic.

The Treasury Department announced the new penalties against two senior members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps and two affiliated companies for supplying lethal drones and related material to insurgent groups in Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen and to Ethiopia, which has been fighting rival Tigray forces for almost a year.

Although the sanctions are unrelated to Iran's atomic program, the Biden administration has said it wants to build on a potential agreement to revive the lan-

guishing 2015 nuclear deal to include Iranian support for such groups and curtail its ballistic missile development. Iran has yet to commit to a date to return to the nuclear talks in Vienna but has signaled it will do so next week with a target of late November for resuming the negotiations. The U.S. and others have expressed skepticism about Iranian intentions, and Biden is set to meet the leaders of Britain, France and Germany on Saturday in Rome to plot strategy on Iran.

The Vienna negotiations halted in June ahead of Iran's election that brought hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi to power. The talks, which do not directly involve the U.S. because President Donald Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal in 2018, have languished since despite the

stated intentions of both Washington and Tehran to return to compliance with the agreement.

Friday's sanctions block any assets that those targeted may have in U.S. jurisdictions, bar Americans from transactions with them and, perhaps more importantly, also subject foreign people and firms that do business with them to potential penalties.

The two targeted Revolutionary Guard Corps commanders, Brig. Gen. Saeed Aghajani and Brig. Gen. Abdollah Mehrabi, oversee the Guard's drone activities, including support for unmanned aerial vehicle, or UAV, attacks by proxies on commercial vessels, Saudi oil facilities and U.S. and allied interests throughout the Middle East, according to Treasury.

"Iran's proliferation of UAVs



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi defends his proposed ministers in a session of parliament, in Tehran, Iran, Wednesday, Aug. 25, 2021.

Associated Press

across the region threatens international peace and stability. Iran and its proxy militants have used UAVs to attack U.S. forces, our partners, and international shipping," Treasury said in a statement. "Treasury will continue to hold Iran accountable for its irrespon-

sible and violent acts."

The two firms, the Kimia Part Sivan Co. and the Oje Parvaz Mado Nafar Co., along with the latter's managing director, were sanctioned for supplying engines and technical assistance to the drone programs, Treasury said. □



# NYC braces for fewer cops, more trash as vax deadline looms

By **MICHAEL R. SISAK, MICHELLE L. PRICE and KAREN MATTHEWS**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Mounting trash. Closed firehouses. Fewer police and ambulances on the street.

That's the possibility New York City is bracing for come Monday as a COVID-19 vaccine mandate looms and thousands of municipal workers remain unwilling to get the shots.

Police officers, firefighters, garbage collectors and most other city workers faced a 5 p.m. Friday deadline to show proof they've gotten at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Workers who don't comply will be put on unpaid leave starting Monday.

Mayor Bill de Blasio held firm on the mandate even as tempers flared on Friday with six firefighters relieved of duty and facing suspension for taking a fire truck to a lawmaker's office and threatening his staff over the vaccine mandate.

The incident was a dramatic escalation after firefighters and other workers rallied Thursday outside de Blasio's official residence, sanitation workers appeared to be skipping garbage pick ups in protest and the city's largest police union went to an appeals court seeking a halt to the vaccine requirement.

Pat Lynch, president of the Police Benevolent Association, said the hard deadline "sets the city up for a real crisis." Andrew Ansbro, president of the Uniformed Firefighters Association, warned longer response times will "be a death sentence to some people."

De Blasio said Thursday that the city has contingencies to maintain adequate staffing and public safety, including mandatory overtime and extra shifts — tools that he said were typically used "in times of challenging crisis."

The mayor called the sanitation slowdowns "unacceptable" and said the department will move to 12-hour and begin working Sunday shifts to ensure trash doesn't pile up.



**Firefighters rally outside Mayor Bill De Blasio's residence Gracie Mansion to protest COVID-19 vaccine mandate for city workers, Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021, in New York.**

"My job is to keep people safe — my employees, and 8.8 million people," de Blasio said at a virtual news briefing. "And until we defeat COVID, people are not safe. If we don't stop COVID, New Yorkers will die."

People who refuse to get vaccinated are now a big factor in the continued spread of the virus. Backers of mandates say New Yorkers have a right not to be infected by public servants unwilling to get the shots.

Nearly one-fifth of city employees covered by the impending mandate had yet to receive at least one vaccine dose as of Thursday, including 21% of police personnel, 29% of firefighters and EMS workers and 33% of sanitation workers, according to city data. City jail guards have another month to comply.

As of 8 p.m. Thursday, 33,400 city workers remained unvaccinated.

The fire department said it

was prepared to close up to 20% of its fire companies and have 20% fewer ambulances in service while changing schedules, canceling vacations and turning to outside EMS providers to make up for expected staffing shortages.

"The department must manage the unfortunate fact that a portion of our workforce has refused to comply with a vaccine mandate for all city employees," Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro said.

Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, who had COVID-19 in January, said his department was sending reminders to workers whose records indicated they hadn't yet received a shot and that NYPD vaccination sites will remain open all weekend. Shea said thousands of officers who've applied for medical and religious exemptions will be allowed to work while their cases are reviewed.

More than 700 officers

were vaccinated on Thursday alone, the NYPD said, rushing to meet the deadline for the mandate and an extra incentive: workers who get a shot by Friday will get \$500.

"On Monday, when this thing really starts being enforced, we're going to check the vaccination status and if you're not vaccinated, no pay and you're going to be not able to work," Shea said in a video message Wednesday to officers. "I don't think anyone wants that to happen. I don't think you want it to happen. I certainly don't. We need you out there."

Fire department officials are holding virtual meetings with staff, imploring them to get vaccinated.

A Staten Island judge on Wednesday refused a police union's request for a temporary block on the mandate, but she ordered city officials into her courtroom next month to explain why the requirement

shouldn't be reversed. If the mandate is deemed illegal, workers put on leave will be given back pay, the city said.

Mike Salsedo, 44, was among hundreds of firefighters protesting Thursday outside de Blasio's residence, Gracie Mansion. He said he believes he has natural immunity to COVID-19 after having the disease last year and doesn't need to be vaccinated, a stance that's contrary to the consensus among public health experts.

"I'm a man of faith, and I don't believe that putting something manmade into my body is good," Salsedo said.

Another firefighter, Jackie-Michelle Martinez, said the ability to choose was "our God-given right" as she questioned the city's decision to move away from its previous policy, which allowed workers to stay on the job if they had a negative COVID-19 test. "If the weekly testing is working, why are you, Mayor de Blasio, eliminating it?" she asked.

COVID-19 is the leading cause of death of law enforcement officers in the U.S., killing 498 officers since the start of 2020 compared to 102 gun deaths, according to the Officer Down Memorial Page, which tracks police fatalities.

De Blasio on Thursday credited the impending deadline for moving the needle on vaccinations across city government. In the last week, the number of affected workers who've gotten at least one dose rose from 71% to 79%.

When the state required all workers at hospitals and nursing homes to get vaccinated, a last-minute rush of people to comply meant that a few facilities experienced staffing challenges. "We expected that a lot of the vaccinations would happen toward the end of the deadline," de Blasio said. "We also know a lot of people make the decision once they really realize that they're not going to get paid. That's just the human reality." □

Associated Press



# Belarus forces U.S. to close public diplomacy, USAID offices

**By YURAS KARMANAU**  
**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)** — Belarus has forced the closure of the U.S. Embassy's Public Diplomacy and USAID offices in a move that comes amid the tensions with the U.S. and its allies over Belarusian authorities' crackdown on protests.

Samantha Power, the U.S. Agency for International Development administrator, said Friday that the Belarusian authorities aim to "severely disrupt U.S. development assistance and public diplomacy in Belarus by forcing the closure of facilities that house key U.S. Government operations, and by ending employment of all of USAID's local staff and Department of State public diplomacy staff."

She added that the move, which is effective Nov. 20, demonstrates the authorities' "callous disregard of the interests of the Belarusian people."

U.S. Envoy for Belarus Julie Fisher described the Belarusian authorities' decision as a reflection of their "deep insecurities about the role of diplomacy, people-to-people ties and independent civil society."

She added that the U.S. "will not be deterred from its commitment to helping advance democracy and human rights in Belarus and to supporting the aspirations of the Belarusian people to build a more promising future in a free and independent Belarus."

The ambassador noted that the U.S. government's development assistance implemented in Belarus by USAID since the 1990s has supported entrepreneurship and the expansion of small-to-medium private enterprises. More recently, it provided key COVID-19 relief while Belarusian authorities were dismissive of the pandemic.

Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the main opposition candidate in the country's disputed August 2020 presidential vote, was forced to leave Belarus under official pressure. She expressed gratitude Friday to the U.S. Embassy Public Diplomacy

and USAID offices.

"They will return to new Belarus," Tsikhanouskaya said on Twitter. "I ask them to continue work for Belarusians — we see and value this consistent support."

Belarus' relations with the U.S. and the European Union have become increasingly tense following the country's authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko being handed a sixth term in the August 2020 vote that the opposition and the West have rejected as rigged. The election fueled massive protests, to which authorities responded with a fierce crackdown that saw more than 35,000 people arrested and thousands beaten by police.

Lukashenko's government has moved methodically to squelch any remaining resistance, shutting NGOs and independent media and arresting activists and journalists.

Viktor Babariko, the former head of a Russia-owned bank who aspired to challenge Lukashenko in the 2020 vote, was sentenced to 14 years in prison in July on the money-laundering charges that he rejected as politically motivated.

On Friday, Babariko's last remaining lawyer, Yauhen Pylchanka, was stripped of his license due to alleged legal violations during the trial. Pylchanka said the move was spearheaded by the country's top state security agency, which still goes under its Soviet-era name KGB.

"The Belarusian KGB initiated my expulsion from the collegium of lawyers under a sham pretext of violation of professional ethics," Pylchanka told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. "Babariko has been left without lawyers and without any communications with the outside world, deprived of the possibility to properly defend himself."

Also Friday, the Belarusian Interior Ministry outlawed popular messaging app channels NEXTA, NEXTA-Live and LUXTA as extremist and blocked German



Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko gestures while speaking during his visit to the Dobrush Paper Mill "Geroy Truda" in Dobrush, Belarus, Friday, Oct. 29, 2021.

Associated Press

broadcaster Deutsche Welle and the Current Time TV channel. □

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# WHO director-general Tedros unopposed for 2nd five-year term

**GENEVA (AP)** — The World Health Organization said Friday that its director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, is running unopposed for a second five-year term.

Tedros, the first African to head the U.N. health agency, has overseen its complex response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has overshadowed his tenure. Trained in biology and infectious diseases with a doctorate in community health, he is also the first WHO chief who is not a medical doctor.

The U.N. health agency made the announcement after the deadline for candidacies for the next term expired last month and Tedros name was proposed by 28 countries: more than half of them European, and three African: Botswana, Kenya and Rwanda. The formal selection of the next director-general takes place at the WHO's next assembly in May.

A former health and foreign minister from Ethiopia, Tedros who goes by his first name received a strong endorsement when France and Germany announced their support for him shortly after the nomination period closed.

Tedros has repeatedly



World Health Organisation Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus waves as he arrives for a meeting of G20 finance and health ministers at the Salone delle Fontane (Hall of Fountains) in Rome, Friday, Oct. 29, 2021.

Associated Press

aired concerns about the deadly Tigray conflict in Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian government shunned his candidacy over his criticism and positions in the former Tigrayan-dominated national government. It has accused him of supporting the rival Tigray forces.

Tedros has been a leading voice urging wealthy coun-

tries with large COVID-19 vaccine stockpiles and the big pharmaceutical companies that make them to do more to improve access to the jabs in the developing world a call that has largely gone unheeded. He has also called for a moratorium on booster shots so that more doses could be made available quicker to

poorer countries, which has also mostly fallen on deaf ears.

WHO says more than 60 countries are now administering about 1 million booster shots of COVID-19 vaccines each day about three times the number of first-time vaccine doses being administered daily in lower-income countries.

In recent weeks, WHO has faced mounting pressure over revelations in September from two independent experts who found that 21 WHO workers were accused of sexually abusing people during the agency's response to an Ebola outbreak in Congo between 2018 and 2020, out of a total of 83 alleged perpetrators connected to the mission. The Code Blue Campaign, which campaigns to end sexual exploitation and abuse by U.N. peacekeepers and other staffers, called that the largest finding ever of sexual abuse in a single U.N. initiative in a single country or time period. On Thursday, the European Union's executive Commission said it temporarily suspended payments that fund WHO humanitarian operations in Congo in the wake of the revelations a move that could affect millions of euros used for programs like emergency response, polio eradication and pandemic response in the African country.

"The reported facts are shocking," a Commission statement said.

"Our thoughts are with the victims and survivors of these misdeeds and the priority is to ensure that they are fully supported." □



Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte arrives for a round table meeting at an EU summit in Brussels, Friday, Oct. 22, 2021.

Associated Press

By **MIKE CORDER**  
Associated Press

**THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)** — Talks to hammer out a new ruling Dutch coalition broke the record Friday for the longest post-election government formation negotiations 226 days and counting.

The previous Dutch record was held by the last government, which was made up of the same four parties currently trying to broker agreements on a policy blueprint for a new four-year term.

The drawn-out talks reflect the fractured Dutch

## Talk talk: Dutch coalition negotiations set new record

political landscape that emerged from the March 17 general election in which 17 parties won at least one seat in the 150-seat lower house of parliament. Leaders also are seeking to bridge ideological differences ranging from how to tackle the climate crisis to euthanasia policy.

"There are more talks next week and probably more after that," caretaker Prime Minister Mark Rutte told Dutch broadcaster NOS as he headed into coalition talks Thursday. "There's a lot of work to be done." After months of stop-start negotiations involving parties from across the political spectrum, the talks have

narrowed down to the same four parties, led by three-term prime minister Rutte's People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, that formed the last coalition.

Rutte's previous administration resigned shortly before the election to take political responsibility for a scandal involving the country's tax department wrongly labelling as fraudsters thousands of parents claiming child benefits.

Despite his resignation, Rutte remains popular among Dutch voters and his conservative party again emerged victorious from the elections, winning just under 22% of the vote.

That means he is in line for a fourth term as prime minister and set to become the country's longest-serving leader.

On Friday, he was holding talks with his Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau in The Hague ahead of the G-20 meeting in Rome and the United Nations climate summit known as COP26, both of which Rutte is attending.

In September, Foreign Minister Sigrid Kaag, who was part of the Cabinet that quit in January, resigned again from her caretaker role over the chaotic Dutch evacuations from Afghanistan following the Taliban's power grab. □



# Haiti PM condemns gangs, kidnappings in public address

By EVENS SANON and DÁNICA COTO

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Prime Minister Ariel Henry condemned gangs and kidnappings in a prerecorded address posted Friday in which he also reassured Haitians that the country was not running out of fuel despite severe shortages that have frustrated millions and sparked recent strikes. It's the first time Henry has acknowledged those issues in a public address since the Oct. 16 kidnapping of 17 members of a U.S.-based missionary group. The 16 Americans, one Canadian and their Haitian driver were abducted amid a spike in gang-related kidnappings that police are struggling to control.

"If they do not stop their wrongdoing, the law will apply to them," Henry said in his message. "The only option for bandits and all their sponsors is imprisonment or death if they do not want to change professions."

The leader of the 400 Mawozo gang that kidnapped the missionaries, including five children, has said he



Barbecue, the leader of the "G9 and Family" gang, stands next to garbage to call attention to the conditions people live in as he leads a march against kidnapping through La Saline neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Friday, Oct. 22, 2021.

would kill them if his demands are not met. Haitian officials have said the gang is seeking \$1 million per person, but that it wasn't clear if that included the children, the youngest of whom is 8 months old.

Henry did not mention the abduction of the missionaries, but denounced kidnappings in general, saying, "All those who take the Hai-

tian people hostage, terrorize the population, are the enemies of the people." He also condemned those who are helping criminals by giving them weapons, ammunition and money, including "all those who deal with them so that they can take power. They are all enemies of the Haitian people, and we are treating them as enemies."

Henry noted that he became prime minister roughly three months ago following the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and found "a country torn, divided, with a state in tatters whose democratic institutions are dysfunctional. "The nation lives under the thumb of bandits. Citizens cannot leave the capital to go to the south. The coun-

try's economic situation is dire. Inflation and high cost of living keep their hold on national life. The budget deficit has reached an unprecedented level and the gourd (currency) continues to drop sharply against the US dollar."

The prime minister spoke days after a widespread strike led to schools, businesses and public transportation to shut down in the capital of Port-au-Prince and beyond to protest the lack of fuel and the country's worsening situation. Gangs have been blamed for blocking gas distribution terminals, with at least one gang leader saying he would lift the blockade if Henry stepped down.

Henry said ships are waiting to unload fuel and that the country, which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic, would not run out of gas. He added that he has created a crisis unit with top officials from finance, justice, police, public works, trade and other departments to find a "quick solution" to the fuel distribution problem. □

Associated Press

## Pumice pileup from undersea volcano causing damage in Japan

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Massive amounts of volcanic pumice pebbles spewed from an undersea volcano in the Pacific Ocean have

been piling up on southern Japanese coasts, damaging ports and fishing boats, and prompting the central government to establish a task force to deal with the unwanted arrivals as a nat-

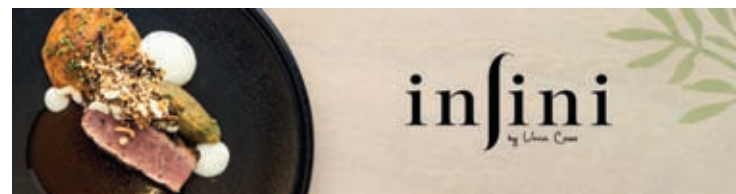
ural disaster, officials said. The gray pebbles were spewed and floating from the Fukutokuokanoba undersea volcano in the Ogasawara island chain, which erupted in mid-August. The island is about 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) south of Tokyo. Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihiko Isozaki told reporters Friday that the pumice pebble damages have so far affected 11 ports on Okinawa and 19 others in the Kagoshima prefecture on Japan's southernmost island of Kyushu.

About 40 fishing boats have been damaged, including six that were unable to move, and ferry services connecting remote islands in Okinawa and Kagoshima have been temporarily suspended. □



In this aerial photo of the coast of the small Japanese island of Lejima in the Okinawa island chain volcanic pumice washing ashore Thursday, Oct. 29, 2021.

Associated Press



Taste limitless possibilities at Infini, where Chef Urvin Croes and his team explores without boundaries and steps with both feet outside of the box to create his most sensational dishes yet. This meticulously designed restaurant located inside Blue Residences on scenic Eagle Beach is a chef's table concept with limited seating where diners are able to interact with the staff and other guests alike throughout the evening.

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# LOCAL



## Special Breast Cancer Awareness Month ceremony

**ORANJESTAD** – October is a month in which we have the opportunity to stand still and focus and create awareness on breast cancer. In connection with this, the Government of Aruba and the Mary Joan Foundation held a special ceremony in front of the Government Building where they painted the front of the building pink with lights.



The Minister of Finance and Culture, Mrs. Xiomara Maduro gave a speech on behalf of the Government of Aruba on the importance of breast cancer awareness in Aruba. Breast cancer is associated with women, but it does also affect men. According to the Minister, it is essential to know our body well and to know early if there is anything wrong to seek medical attention in time.

Wearing pink is not only to create awareness but also to support all those who are currently fighting against breast cancer. The aim is to spread hope to those with breast cancer to keep on fighting the battle and recover. The wish is that one day there will not only be a cure for breast cancer but all cancers, the Minister said in her speech. The Minister thanked the Mary

Joan Foundation for its efforts in creating awareness about breast cancer and information about how to detect breast cancer. Often patients can be embarrassed to expose themselves to a doctor since it is a private part of the body. It should not be an embarrassment since it can save your life if detected early. It takes courage of each and everyone and if there

is something wrong, please get it checked. Many are afraid that a mammogram can be painful, or patients are embarrassed to undress in front of others. In addition to a monthly self-examination, it is essential to get your mammogram done when called to do so. The Minister expressed her gratitude to the BOB Foundation, Queen Wilhelmina Foundation, the Edmund Harms Foundation, and those who work in the Public Health sector and are part of the process of finding a cure and prevention.

The Minister is also very thankful to everyone for their donations, to the IM-SAN for branding an Ambulance with pink colors, those involved with the awareness campaigns, and who show solidarity to all fighting against breast

cancer. Minister Xiomara Maduro, Minister Ursell Arénds, and member of parliament Alvin Molina, and the board of the Mary Joan Foundation lit the front of the Government's building with pink lights to share the message to the community about being preventive. It also shows solidarity and support to those fighting against breast cancer, acknowledging that they are not alone. It also represents a big hug to help the patients surpass the situation and show them that the Government has them in their thoughts and heart. After turning on the pink lights, the Ministers and Members of Parliament received a pin from the Mary Joan Foundation to recognize their support to the local and global awareness campaign about breast cancer. □



**ORANJESTAD** – This weekend Paseo Herencia, the popular Shopping, Dining & Entertainment Center located in the heart of Palm Beach, will have a variety of Halloween activities for the entire family (pets included).

Pass by with your Halloween costume and bag and Trick or Treat at the Paseo Herencia stores, restaurants and cinema starting from 5pm to 8pm. Kids can also get creative at

the Arts & Crafts corner located behind the cinema escalators starting from 5pm with fun Halloween crafts and drawings. Want to add a scary movie to your visit? Visit the Caribbean Cinemas located on the second floor and check out the kids' movies: Monster Family 2 or Ron's Gone Wrong. For Horror movie fans, they have Halloween Kills, Last Night in Soho and Antlers. To see movie schedule visit [www.caribbeancinemas.com](http://www.caribbeancinemas.com).

## Halloween Weekend at the Paseo Shopping Center

On Sunday, Paseo Herencia will have its Halloween show on stage starting at 6:30pm with a variety of kids games and prizes. Best costumes will be selected amongst the public. Prizes will go to most creative costumes by age category, group, and pet.

Visit the Bulldog café located in the center of



the Paseo Herencia plaza for some fun skaryoke (karaoke) and piñata fun on Sunday.

### Pet Activities

Come with your pet and participate in the Pet Halloween Costume Contest by taking a picture and using the hashtag #howloweenatpaseo. Pets also get tasty treats at Drunk's Denial with dog cupcakes while you indulge in the unique alcohol infused gourmets for adults.

### Shopping deals

Shop for stylish clothing and accessories at Sunset Shack, Tommy Hilfiger, Psycho Bunny and Pandora and enjoy special discounts and promotions only this weekend.

### Restaurant Special

Visit the Lazy Turtle restau-

rant and enjoy a 3-course menu for only \$30. Choose between Caesar Salad, White Fish Ceviche, and pumpkin soup for appetizer. For entrée try the Kuvuta Kuku dish, Shrimp Mandarin or Grouper Filet and for dessert choose between the Double Chocolate Caramel Turtle or the Dame Blanch.

TGI Fridays also offers the Halloween edition Hamburger with your favorite appetizers on top and a special edition Cocktail with boogie eyes on top. Kids in costumes receive a free cup of dirt with purchase of a meal.

Experience the Halloween fun in Aruba at Paseo Herencia. The shopping center is located in front of Holiday Inn, walking distance from the high-rise hotels. Stores and restaurants are open till 10pm. □



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## Covid Test Center at Paseo has the best experience!

**PALM BEACH - Don't spend a single moment of your long awaited holiday in Aruba thinking about your return testing. The Covid Test Center Aruba located at the Paseo Herencia Mall is your travel ally. Just sit back and relax knowing that, when the time comes, their professional staff will make this process a breeze for you. No need to make an appointment or dread the nasal swab; you'll be done with it in a matter of minutes and back to fun stuff.**

Some regions require proof or certification of negative COVID-19 status before allowing people into or out of

the country. With rules and guidelines varying greatly from country to country, the safest approach is to have recent proof you are COVID-19 negative before you get to the airport. Covid Test Center @ Paseo provides both PCR and Antigen type testing with results within hours; and both are accepted by the CDC. Covid Test Center @ Paseo is conveniently located at the Paseo Herencia Mall in the heart of the Palm Beach Strip and right across from the Playa Linda and Holiday Inn hotels; only two doors from T.G.I. Friday's. We are open seven days a week, between 9 am and 9 pm. This gives you the

choice to walk in when it better suits you. It can be at the start or at the end of your day. No appointment needed here.

The friendly technicians at Covid Test Center @ Paseo will take your information as we are aware it is imperative that this shows accurately on the results. For a seamless process, please verify that you have provided the correct email to deliver the certificate. Said certificate can be printed at our offices should you wish to do so.

We understand that nobody enjoys doing a nasal swab. That is why we take pride in our reputation of being the gentlest swabbers on the island. First, we will not rush you just to go to the next in line. Through clear given instructions we want you to feel comfortable. When you are ready, we will promptly but tenderly take a proper sample. Many elsewhere traumatized people praise the difference it makes to test with us.

Forget about counting hours before your flight, our turnaround is fast! For travel to the US, for example, a day before will suffice. A great game plan is to test first, then head out for an evening of dining, shopping and entertainment at the Paseo Herencia Mall, home of the water and lights show in the evenings. By the time you are back at the hotel, your results will be ready in your inbox.

A PCR test costs \$75 and results are ready the next day, while Antigen test costs \$35



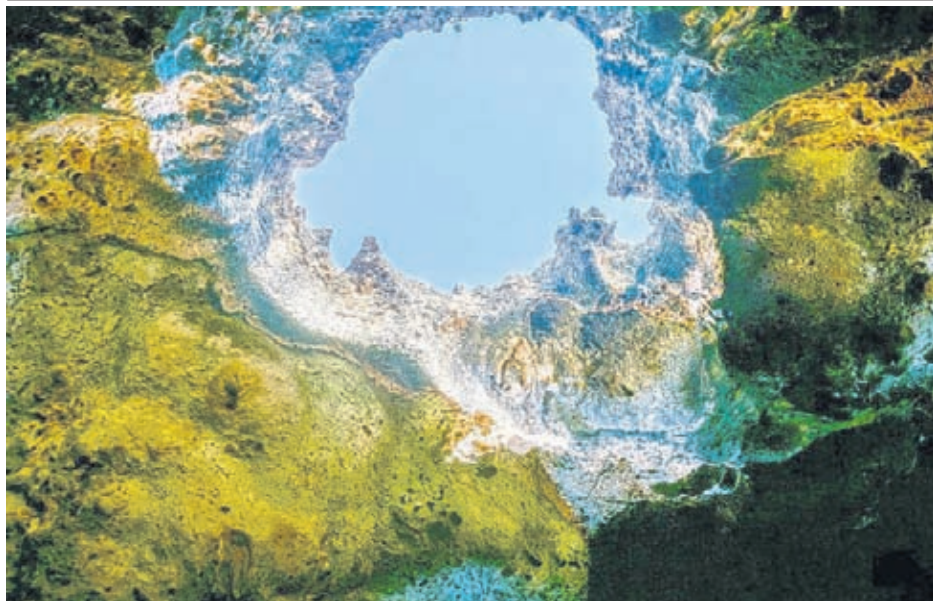
with same day results. If you are staying at an off-high-rise area property, you can benefit from the free parking our customers receive

at the mall lot.).

For more information follow us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. □







## Explore Aruba

**ORANJESTAD** — Aruba Today collected some things to do **BEYOND** the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

### Arikok National Park

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website [www.arubanationalpark.org](http://www.arubanationalpark.org)

### Natural Bridge

One of Aruba's favorite tourist attractions is the Natural Bridge. For thousands of years, pounding waves and strong winds have slowly chiseled away the limestone cliffs along Aruba's north coast to create several natural bridges. The largest of these bridges used to be the famous Natural Bridge. The bridge was a formation of coral limestone cut out by years of pounding surf, and was one of the largest of these types of spans in the world. It stood some 23 feet (7 meters) above sea level and spans more than 100 feet (30 meters). Unfortunately the bridge collapsed on September 2, 2005. Despite this, it is still the most photographed natural bridge and it remains a popular tourist attraction in Aruba, with the adjacent and intact Baby Bridge also meriting a visit. The Natural Bridge is the perfect stop while touring Aruba. There is no admission fee or set hours for visiting. Quench your thirst with refreshing beverages & refuel your tank with local snacks.

### The Lourdes Grotto

Named in commemoration of the famous French religious landmark, was created under the guidance of a priest named "Erkamp" and parishioners in the year 1958. The grotto, a shrine built into the rocks is located in Seroe Preto, just off the main road to San Nicolas. A statue of the Virgin Mary, weighing 700 kilos, was hoisted into place in the grotto. Every year, on February 11 (feast of Lady of Lourdes), a procession leaves from the St. Theresita church in San Nicolas to the grotto, where a mass is performed. The grotto is located road-side and can be visited daily. Just make sure you park safely in the event you wish to stop for pictures at this location. □

## Amazing things to know about Aruba

1. Everyone native Aruban speaks four languages; English, Spanish, Dutch and Papiamentu. Dutch and Papiamentu are the official languages of Aruba.
2. The origin of Papiamentu is still a bit of a mystery. However, Arubans say that it was developed from Portugeuse-African pidgin which was used as the language for communication between slaves and slave traders. There are also some Dutch and Spanish influences.
3. In most schools in Aruba children have all their lessons in Dutch. They can only speak Papiamentu during the Papiamentu class.
4. Aruba is a former Dutch colony. It is now its own country. However, Aruba is still part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
5. Aruba is not in Hurricane Alley, which means there's no BAD time to visit Aruba.
6. Aruba's currency is the Aruban florin which is worth about 0.56 US Dollars. Dollars are accepted everywhere though.
7. The crime rate in Aruba is pretty low. It is one of the safest islands in the Caribbean.
8. Carnival in Aruba is a BIG DEAL. It's not just Brazil! There's parades, Carnival Queen elections, dance competitions and more. So if you're in Aruba in February, make sure to attend one of the many Carnival events. Let's see if Covid will allow us to have carnival back in 2022.
9. We produce our own drinking water thanks to their desalination plant. You can drink the water straight from the taps. The electricity on the island is also a by-product of the desalinisation plant.
10. Aruba is home to a rare species of the burrowing owl. It lives in burrows in the ground hidden by cacti. It is one of Aruba's national symbols and appears on postage stamps.
11. Before Covid Aruba had over a million tourists visit its shores. That's around 10 times the local population.
12. There are over 90 different nationalities living on the island in pretty much perfect harmony
13. The Aruban flag was adopted in 1976.
14. Aruba's national day is March 18th. Just after St.Patrick's day.



# U.S. wages jump by the most in records dating back 20 years

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Wages jumped in the three months ending in September by the most on records dating back 20 years, a stark illustration of the growing ability of workers to demand higher pay from companies that are desperate to fill a near-record number of available jobs.

Pay increased 1.5% in the third quarter, the Labor Department said Friday. That's up sharply from 0.9% in the previous quarter. The value of benefits rose 0.9% in the July-September quarter, more than double the preceding three months.

Workers have gained the upper hand in the job market for the first time in at least two decades, and they are commanding higher pay, more benefits, and other perks like flexible work hours. With more jobs available than there are unemployed people, government data shows, businesses have been forced to work harder to attract staff.

Higher inflation is eating away at some of the wage increases, but in recent months overall pay has kept up with rising prices. The 1.5% increase in wages and salaries in the third quarter is ahead of the 1.2% increase in inflation during that period, economists said.

However, compared with a year ago, it's a closer call. In the year ending in September, wages and salaries soared 4.2%, also a record gain. But the government also reported Friday that prices increased 4.4% in September from year earlier. Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, inflation was 3.6% in the past year.

Jason Furman, a former top economic adviser to President Barack Obama, said Friday that inflation-adjusted wages still trail their pre-pandemic level, given the big price jumps that occurred over the spring and summer for new and used cars, furniture, and airline tickets.

Whether inflation fades in the coming months will



In this Sept. 22, 2021, file photo, a hiring sign is placed at a booth for Jameson's Irish Pub during a job fair in the West Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

determine how much benefit workers get from higher pay.

Many economists expect inflation to slow a bit, while wages are likely to keep rising.

Pay is rising much faster in the recovery from the pandemic recession than in the recovery from the Great Recession of 2008-2009, when wage growth kept slowing until a year after that downturn ended. That's because of the different nature of the two recessions and the different policy responses.

There has been much more government stimulus during and after the pandemic recession compared with the previous one, including the \$2 trillion financial support package signed by former President Donald Trump in March 2020 and the \$1.9 trillion in aid approved by President Joe Biden this March. Both packages provided stimulus checks and enhanced unemployment benefits that fueled greater

spending.

Lower-paid workers have seen the biggest gains, with pay rising for employees at restaurants, bars and hotels by 8.1% in the third quarter from a year earlier. For retail workers it's jumped 5.9%.

The healthy increase for disadvantaged workers "is the result of specific policy choices to give workers a better bargaining hand and to ensure the economy recovered faster," said Mike Konczal, a director at the left-leaning Roosevelt Institute. "The fact that it's happening is pretty unique."

The stimulus checks and an extra \$300 a week in jobless benefits, which ended in early September, gave

those out of work more leverage to demand higher pay, Konczal said. In addition, the Fed's low-interest rate policies helped spur more spending, raising the demand for workers.

In August, there were 10.4 million jobs available, down from the 11 million in July, which was the most in two decades.

Millions of Americans are responding to rising wages by quitting their jobs for better-paying positions. In August, nearly 3% of American workers quit their jobs, a record high. A higher number of quits also means companies have to raise pay to keep their employees.

Workers who switch jobs are

seeing some of the sharpest income gains in decades. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, in September job-switchers saw their pay jump 5.4% compared with a year earlier. That's up from just 3.4% in May and the biggest increase in nearly 20 years. For those who stayed in their jobs, pay rose 3.5%.

Esther Cano, 26, is one of those who found a new job that paid more in the July-September quarter. A recent college graduate who isn't yet sure of her long-term career path, she left a job as a dispatcher at an HVAC firm in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for a position at the job placement agency Robert Half. She started in July and got a raise of about 10%.

"What I was requesting was lower than what they were willing to pay," Cano said. "It was a no-brainer on that end, plus the environment, the room for growth, the opportunity."

Cano has already gotten a promotion to a team leader position, where she helps place temporary employees who work in finance and accounting.

Most economists expect solid wage gains to continue for the coming months. Data from the Indeed job listings website shows that employers are still posting huge numbers of available jobs.

Higher pay can fuel inflation, as companies raise prices to cover their increased costs. But that's not the only way businesses can respond. Lydia Bousour, an economist at Oxford Economics, notes that corporate profits in the April-June quarter were at their highest level in nearly a decade. That suggests many companies can pay higher salaries without having to lift prices. □

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# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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9 Out of bed

10 Company symbols

12 Disturbed to the  
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14 Halloween scarers

16 Pewter component

17 Urgent call

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22 Tortoise's rival

23 Eat away

25 Opera piece

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32 Halloween scarers

34 Train stop: Abbr.

35 Band blaster

36 Halloween scarers

38 Black card

40 Welcome

41 Energy choice

42 Abrasive powder

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10-30

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is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-30

CRYPTOQUOTE

Y X W Y V O I P X Q K V U I Y N C Q M

P Z V B Y I L I X W Y N C Q M P Q T

I L I X W Y N C Q M P Z V B Y

K V U I Y N C Q M Y N V U P K N B D O I W

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: YOU YOURSELF AS MUCH AS ANYBODY IN THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE DESERVE YOUR LOVE AND AFFECTION. — SOURCE UNKNOWN

## Asian spider takes hold in Georgia, sends humans scurrying



The joro spider, a large spider native to East Asia, is seen in Johns Creek, Ga., on Sunday, Oct. 24, 2021.

Associated Press

By SUDHIN THANAWALA  
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A large spider native to East Asia has spun its thick, golden web on power lines, porches and vegetable patches all over north Georgia this year a proliferation that has driven some unnerved homeowners indoors and prompted a flood of anxious social media posts. In metro Atlanta, Jennifer Turpin a self-described arachnophobe stopped blowing leaves in her yard after inadvertently walking into a web created by the Joro spider. Stephen Carter has avoided a walking trail along the Chattahoochee River where he encountered Joro webs every dozen steps.

Farther east in Winterville, Georgia, Will Hudson's front porch became unusable amid an abundance of Joro webs 10 feet (3 meters) deep. Hudson estimates he's killed more than 300 of the spiders on his property.

"The webs are a real mess," said Hudson, an entomologist at the University of Georgia. "Nobody wants to come out of the door in the morning, walk down the steps and get a face full of spider web."

The Joro *Trichonephila clavata* is part of a group of spiders known as orb weavers for their highly organized, wheel-shaped webs. Common in Japan, China, Korea and Taiwan, Joro females have colorful yellow, blue and red markings

on their bodies. They can measure three inches (8 cm) across when their legs are fully extended.

It's not clear exactly how and when the first Joro spider arrived in the U.S. In Georgia, a researcher identified one about 80 miles (128 km) northeast of Atlanta in 2014. They have also been found in South Carolina, and Hudson is convinced they will spread across the South.

It's also not clear why they are so abundant this year, though experts agree their numbers have exploded.

"We see natural ebbs and flows in the populations of many different species that may be linked to local conditions, particularly slight changes in rainfall," said Paula Cushing, an arachnologist at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Cushing and other experts say Joros are not a threat to humans or dogs and cats and won't bite them unless they are feeling very threatened. Hudson said a researcher collecting them with her bare hands reported the occasional pinch, but said the spiders never broke her skin.

Researchers, however, don't agree fully on what impact, if any, the spider will have on other species and the environment.

Debbie Gilbert, 67, isn't waiting to find out. She has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for the spiders around her home in Norcross, Georgia, winding their webs with a stick,

bringing them down and stomping them.

"I don't advocate killing anything. I live in peace with all the spiders around here and everything else," she said. "But (Joros) just don't belong here, that's all."

Turpin, 50, tried to set a Joro spider web on fire at her East Cobb home, but then got scared it would fall on her and fell into a hole as she quickly backpedaled. She had a neighbor remove it instead.

"I just don't think I'm going to do yard work anymore," she said.

Nancy Hinkle, another entomologist at the University of Georgia, said Joros help suppress mosquitoes and biting flies and are one of the few spiders that will catch and eat brown marmorated stink bugs, which are serious pests to many crops.

"This is wonderful. This is exciting. Spiders are our friends," she said. "They are out there catching all the pests we don't want around our home."

Ann Rypstra, who studies spider behavior at Miami University, was more cautious in her assessment of the Joro's potential impacts, saying more research was needed.

"I'd always err on the side of caution when you have something that establishes itself where it's not supposed to be," she said.

Researchers at South Carolina's Clemson University also were more circumspect, saying in a factsheet published online in August that they "do not yet know if there will be any negative impacts from this non-native species on the local ecology of South Carolina." Amateur gardeners and naturalists have raised concerns about the safety of native spiders and bees and other pollinators.

Cushing said Joros are probably big enough to take on large pollinators caught in their webs, but those insects may be an insignificant part of their diet.



## Dad bod FTW, amirite? Dictionary adds hundreds of new words

**SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP)** — Dad bod, amirite, TBH and FTW are now dictionary-appropriate.

Merriam-Webster has added 455 new words to its venerable dictionary, including a number of abbreviations and slang terms that have become ubiquitous on social media.

"Just as the language never stops evolving, the dictionary never stops expanding," the nearly 200-year-old Springfield, Massachusetts-based company said on its website. "New terms and new uses for existing terms are the constant in a living language."

The dictionary company said the quick and informal nature of messaging, texting, and tweeting, which has only increased during the pandemic, has "contributed to a vocabulary newly rich in efficient and abbreviated expression."

Among them: "TBH", an abbreviation for "to be honest" and "FTW," an abbreviation for "for the win." Merriam-Webster explains that FTW is used "especially to express approval or support. In social media, FTW is often used to acknowledge a clever or funny response to a question or meme."

And it says "amirite" is a quick way to write "am I right," as in, "English spelling is consistently inconsistent, amirite?"

The coronavirus pandemic also looms large in the collection of new entrants as "super-spreader," "long COVID" and "vaccine passport" made the list.

Partisan politics contributed more slang to the lexicon, such as "whataboutism," which Merriam-Webster defines as "the act or practice of responding to an accusation of wrongdoing by claiming that an offense committed by another is similar or worse." For Britons, the dictionary notes that "whataboutery" is more commonly used.

The dreaded "vote-a-ramas" that have become a fixture in the U.S. Congress is explained this way: "an



Merriam-Webster.com is displayed on a computer screen on Friday, Dec. 6, 2019, in New York.

Associated Press

unusually large number of debates and votes that happen in one day on a single piece of legislation to which an unlimited number of amendments can be introduced, debated, and voted on."

And still other new terms come from the culinary world, such as "fluffernutter," the homey sandwich of peanut butter, marshmallow crème and white bread.

Horchata, the cold sweetened beverage made from ground rice or almonds and usually flavored with cinnamon or vanilla, also made the cut, as did chicharron, the popular fried pork belly or pig skin snack.

As for "dad bod"? The dictionary defines that as a "physique regarded as typical of an average father; especially: one that is slightly overweight and not extremely muscular." □



### Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.  
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668  
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.  
Acc. #23951903  
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

### Assistant Director

Xiomara Arends

### Editors

Liza Koolman (Management assistant)

Richard Brooks

### Sales

Linda Reijnders

Sulaika Croes

### Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

### Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

### Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Pilar Flores

### Columnists

Anthony Croes

Weststraat 22  
T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com

W: www.arubatoday.com

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# Review: Black, white and shades of gray in superb 'Passing'

By JOCELYN NOVECK  
AP National Writer

Rarely have the hues of black and white, cinematographically speaking, looked so beautifully lush as in "Passing," the hugely impressive directorial debut of actor Rebecca Hall.

But at its core, this film is about shades of gray. Which is to say, motivations, desires and ambitions are even more layered and textured than the visuals in this quietly compelling film, which takes place in Prohibition-era New York and explores ideas of race, identity and the toxic ripples of a painful lie.

Adapted by Hall from the 1929 Nella Larsen novel of the same name, "Passing" looks at two sides of the racial divide through a pair of women, childhood friends who have a chance meeting years later. The women, played by the extraordinary duo of Ruth Negga and Tessa Thompson, are Black, but they have made drastically different choices: One lives as Black, the other is "passing" as white. The tale is of deep significance to director Hall: her own American grandfather was Black but passed for many years as white, she says. She grew up in Britain and never knew him personally — he died when her mother was a teenager — but his story has nonetheless clearly had an impact. We first meet Irene (Thompson), a doctor's wife and mother of two living a comfortable upper-middle class



This image released by Netflix shows actors Tessa Thompson, left and Ruth Negga with director Rebecca Hall, right, during the filming of "Passing."

Associated Press

existence in Harlem, shopping on a sweltering summer day in midtown. Clad in a filmy summer dress and gauzy hat (the costumes by Marci Rodgers are wonderful, especially those '20s hats), she appears to use the hat's brim as a shield, eyes downcast so other patrons — all white — won't look too closely.

Escaping the brutal heat in a hotel tea room, she sees a prosperous white couple enter, visiting from Chicago. After the husband leaves, his wife, sporting a chic blonde bob, trains her eyes on Irene. She says she knows her. Irene says she must be mistaken, but the woman's familiar laugh reminds her: This is Clare, a

childhood friend from Harlem.

The two get to talking, and Irene boldly asks whether Clare's husband knows she is Black. He does not. Up in Clare's suite, she explains how she made her choice: It's wonderful to have money. In fact, she says, "it's entirely worth the price." That "price" includes having prayed for nine months of pregnancy that her daughter would turn out light-skinned (she did), so she could keep her ruse going. Still, "I have everything I ever wanted," Clare says. Then husband John (Alexander Skarsgard, in another villain role) arrives back in the room. Turns out, he's an odious racist. He calls Clare

a shocking nickname — a private joke — and denigrates all Black people. As Irene makes a hasty exit, Clare looks out the door with longing, as if to say "Please take me with you." Summer turns to autumn (Hall and cinematographer Eduard Grau do a stunning job of evoking changing seasons without the use of color), and Irene has been ignoring letters from Clare, who one day simply turns up on the doorstep, so eager is she to be part of Irene's life.

At first standoffish, Irene relents — she has feelings for Clare that she herself doesn't fully understand — and soon, Clare is accompanying Irene and her doc-

tor husband Brian (André Holland, also excellent) to Irene's splashy charity ball, reveling in the opportunity to dance and laugh with Black people. She's desperate for this connection; the fear that her husband might find out seems more present to Irene than to Clare.

That ball scene is terrific, with its joyous dancing and sparkly frocks. Here and elsewhere, jazz music by Devonté Hynes provides a wonderfully evocative soundtrack to what is, for Clare, a headlong descent into danger, ending with one of the more disturbing (and yet starkly beautiful) endings you'll see this year. Negga is heartbreaking as a woman who seems to recognize, despite fun-loving appearances, that time is running out on her ruse. And Thompson is riveting as a woman whose own life, while truer and happier than Clare's, is not without struggles, longings and contradictions.

For example: Irene refuses to let Brian teach their boys about the perils of being Black in America — there's been a lynching in Arkansas, and he feels the boys should know. For her, silence is the less painful option.

Irene also has feelings for Clare that seem to run deeper than friendship. And her own complicated sentiments about race and class identity play out in a relationship with the household maid. □

# Review: Plush are the future of rock on debut album



This cover image released by Pavement Entertainment shows the self-titled album by Plush. (Pavement Entertainment via Associated Press)

By WAYNE PARRY

I no longer fear for the future of rock 'n' roll: It is in the capable hands of the four young ladies of Plush, perhaps the heaviest all-female rock group ever to put pick to string, and whose debut album could be the best album of 2021. Imagine Pink singing for Metallica, and that just scratches the surface of the Plush sound.

You probably don't know the name lead singer Moriah Formica yet — but you will, and soon. It will be in the same sentence with some of the greatest female vocalists — make that vocalists, period — of all

time, including Ann Wilson of Heart and Pat Benatar, whose songs Formica used to cover as a teenager in rock clubs with only an acoustic guitar. The arena has not been built with a roof high enough to contain her soaring, multi-octave vocals. The next song Formica writes about a happy romantic relationship will be the first: This disc is laden with pain-filled laments and rages, including the infectious first single, "Hate."

There are songs about partners who abuse substances ("Sober,") cheat ("Why Do I Even Try") and lie ("Don't Say That.") But almost

all of them end in messages of female empowerment in which the protagonist realizes she's in a bad situation, cuts her losses and leaves to look for a better life ("Found a Way," "Better Off Alone" and "Walk Away.")

Instrumentally, Formica, who also plays rhythm guitar; bassist Ashley Suppa; lead guitarist Bella Perron and drummer Brooke Colucci, all of them under the age of 21, play like accomplished veterans who hit as hard as anyone out there.

The kids are way better than all right: They could be the future of rock. □



# Analysis: Rookie coaches need more time for job evaluations

By **ROB MAADDI**  
**AP Pro Football Writer**

Rookie head coaches usually inherit losing teams and are tasked with quickly building a winning culture in the NFL.

If they don't get it done fast enough, it's onto the next coach.

There's no patience in sports, but judging guys before the midpoint of their first season is unfair.

Only one of the NFL's seven first-year coaches has a winning record. Brandon Staley is off to a 4-2 start with the Los Angeles Chargers. It helps that he took over a team that finished 7-9 last year and already had a franchise quarterback in Justin Herbert.

Arthur Smith is 3-3 with the Atlanta Falcons, including three wins in the last four games. He has Matt Ryan, who looks like his old self after a rough start.

The five other rookie coaches are 5-28 combined. If owners listened to media and fans, some of these guys wouldn't last through their first season.

Some people called for Urban Meyer to lose his job before he even stepped on a sideline with the Jacksonville Jaguars. He was criticized for hiring former Iowa assistant coach Chris Doyle and giving Tim Tebow an opportunity to resume his football career at a new position. Doyle resigned and Tebow was cut.

Meyer needed six tries



**New York Jets head coach Robert Saleh walks down the sideline during the first half of an NFL football game against the New England Patriots, Sunday, Oct. 24, 2021, in Foxborough, Mass.**

**Associated Press**

to get his first win. That shouldn't be a surprise considering the Jaguars (1-5) won only one game last season and had one winning season in the previous 13 years.

Meyer has Trevor Lawrence and little more. It's doubtful he'll ever match the success he had in college and he may not pan out in the pros, but Meyer deserves time to get things right — assuming he wants to stay in Jacksonville.

Dan Campbell was ripped right after his introductory news conference in Detroit. The former NFL tight end avoided coach-speak — "we're going to bite a knee-cap off" — in an emotion-

ally charged virtual session that left critics debating his ability to lead the team.

Winning over the locker room is easier than winning games. The Lions are 0-7, though two losses came on long field goals as time expired, including Justin Tucker's record-setting 66-yarder.

The Lions have had 13 double-digit loss seasons since 2001 and only one playoff victory since winning the NFL title in 1957. That track record of futility isn't Campbell's fault.

No one expected much from David Culley in Houston. The Texans (1-6) rebuild really starts when Deshaun Watson is traded.

Hope for Jets fans under Robert Saleh and rookie quarterback Zach Wilson has turned into more frustration. New York is 1-5, Wilson is injured and the team appears certain to miss the playoffs for the 11th straight season, the NFL's longest active drought. But they're smart enough to be patient with Saleh in the Big Apple. No coach has faced the fire so far quite like Philadelphia's Nick Sirianni. He takes even more heat for his wordy responses to questions than he does for his questionable playcalling. They wanted him out after his first news conference when he seemed nervous and rambled. They blasted

him when he talked about playing rock-paper-scissors with prospects before the draft. The condemnation reached Kotitian levels — nobody in Philly was criticized more than former Eagles coach Rich Kotite — this week when Sirianni told reporters he used a flower analogy in a message to his 2-5 team.

"The results aren't there right now, but what's going on here is that there's growth under the soil," Sirianni said. "I put a picture of a flower up, and it's coming through the ground, and the roots are growing out. The roots are continuing to grow out. Everybody wants to see results. Shoot, nobody wants to see results more than us, right? We want to see results, too. But it's really important that the foundation is being built and that the roots are growing out. "And the only way the roots grow out every single day and they grow stronger and they grow better is if we all water, we all fertilize, we all do our part, each individual, each individual coach, each individual player, everybody in the building, that we do our part to water to make sure that, when it does pop out, it really pops out and it grows."

If Staley made that comparison in Los Angeles, he would've been lauded for his insightful perspective. But that doesn't work in fickle Philly. □

## NHL not disciplining ex-Blackhawks GM for role in scandal

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The NHL decided Friday not to discipline former Chicago Blackhawks assistant general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff for his role in the club's mishandling of sexual assault allegations made by a player in 2010. Commissioner Gary Bettman met with Cheveldayoff, now the GM of the Winnipeg Jets, on Friday morning. He concluded based on that conversation and the team's investigation that Cheveldayoff was not responsible for improper decisions made at

the time.

"While on some level, it would be easiest to paint everyone with any association to this terrible matter with the same broad brush, I believe that fundamental fairness requires a more in-depth analysis of the role of each person," Bettman said in a statement. "Kevin Cheveldayoff was not a member of the Blackhawks senior leadership team in 2010, and I cannot, therefore, assign to him responsibility for the club's actions, or inactions."

Blackhawks GM Stan Bowman and former coach Joel Quenneville, now with Florida, each resigned this week.

Cheveldayoff is the only person who was present in a meeting about Kyle Beach's allegations against video coach Brad Aldrich to still be working in the NHL by the end of the week.

Bettman said Cheveldayoff's status as a low-ranking team official and his limited role in that meeting absolved him of authority to address the allegations. □



**NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman speaks before an NHL hockey game between the Seattle Kraken and the Vancouver Canucks, Saturday, Oct. 23, 2021, in Seattle.**

**Associated Press**



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SAVE  
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\$5.14

Each



SAVE  
\$0.57

GoodBurly Mayo 25% 500ml

\$1.42

Each



SAVE  
\$0.43

Maple Pecan Vlecht

\$0.57

Each



SAVE  
\$0.43

Bello Sweets Assorted  
Cups 200gr

\$1.71

Each



SAVE  
\$0.74

Pillsbury Devils Food  
Cake Mix 15.25oz

\$1.95

Each



SAVE  
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Almond Breeze Unsweet  
Original Milk 32oz

\$2.85

Each



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Dove Shower Gel  
Elements 250ml

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